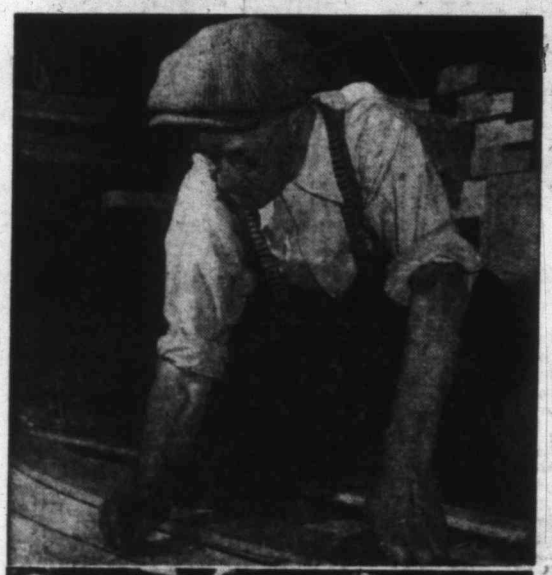
In Their Specialized Trade, Nova Scotians
STILL the GREATEST

Methods of construction change very little with the years. Here workmen work above the skeleton of a schooner in a Lunenberg yard, using timber and mild steel bolts for a hull that will defy the worst the North Atlantic can throw at it.



Typical of the craftsmen in this trade are Shipwright Alton L. McKay, above, and Hugh McKay and Bill Jackson, who work under his direction.

PEOPLE often wonder why it is that Nova Scotians are among the world's best wooden shipbuilders.

For one thing, the building of "wind" ships was one of Canada's earliest industries. Then, right at the water's edge, there was some of the finest building material to be found anywhere: tamarack, pine and spruce.

And Canada, from about 1800 to 1875, ranked fourth among the ship-building and ship-owning nations of the world!

For one reason or another, Canada's position as a seafaring nation has steadily declined since then. World competition was too keen. Cost of construction soared. But, more than anything else, cost of operation outpaced earnings to such an extent that ship-owners simply sold out and quit, or transferred registries to other flags and hired foreign crews.

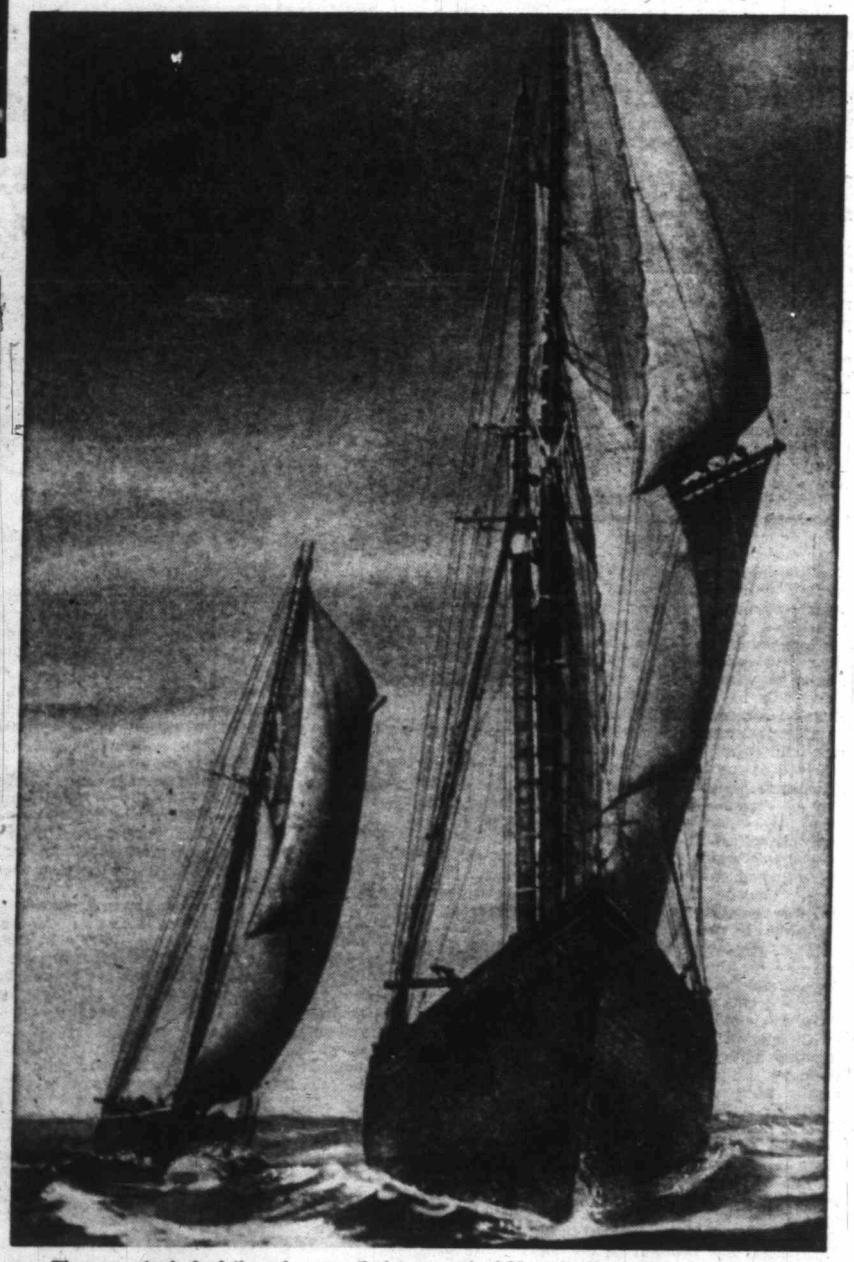
That was the general picture.

But one thing has remained, unchanged, except for improvement, over the years.

In the 74 yards along the Nova Scotia coast the art of building wooden ships has never been lost. The same crafts and skills which fashioned the world-famous Bluenose in 1921 are jealously guarded and preserved. The deepsea fishing schooners which come out of these yards are the best in the business. And the custom-built yachts and cabin cruisers are as good or better than can be found anywhere else.

They say the Nova Scotian shipbuilders not only grow old in their trade, they also grow better.

The accompanying pictures tell their own story.



These are typical of the schooners that come out of Nova Scotia yards. Although there was a slump in shipbuilding in the Maritimes from the late 30's until recently, there are signs of revival. More and more frequently, people who can afford the best look to Shelbourne, Lunenberg and the rest of the great yards for their craft.